Hazardous Materials Information and Training

SafetyNet #: 33

This SafetyNet outlines requirements for safety training under the Hazardous Substances Information and Training Act. It is the responsibility of every supervisor to ensure that employees who receive, use, store, and transport hazardous materials have received information required by state law.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are not limited to the laboratory. Familiar materials such as cleaning agents, paints, photocopy supplies, art materials, and automotive supplies may also contain hazardous components. Whenever there is doubt about the hazard associated with any material, please contact EH&S at 530-752-1493.

Information and Training Requirements

California law requires that employers obtain and make available Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) for every hazardous material used in the workplace. SDSs are prepared by manufacturers and describe properties of hazardous materials and protective measures to be used when handling them. Employees must be provided with training when they are hired, when their exposure to hazardous materials changes, and within 30 days of the date that new or significantly revised SDSs are received.

Supervisors must provide employees with the following information:

- **An explanation of the contents of an SDS and the location of SDSs in the department.** EH&S has prepared the poster "Safety Data Sheets and Chemical Emergencies" to assist departments. Copies of the poster are available from EH&S. EH&S has prepared SafetyNet # 45 [1], “Glossary of SDS Terms” to aid in understanding some of the SDS terms used.

- **A description of the California Hazardous Substances Information and Training Act.** (This SafetyNet contains an adequate description.)

- **A description of all operations in the work area that involve hazardous materials.**
• A warning that if employees must perform a non-routine or unfamiliar operation that may involve hazardous materials, they should contact their supervisor first.

• The location and availability of UC Davis' written hazardous materials communication program and how employees can apply the program to their job situations. Policy and Procedure Manual Section 290-27 [2] contains UC Davis' written hazardous materials communication program.

• The methods available for detection of hazardous materials in work areas including alarms if present, visible emissions or odors, are characteristic physiological sensations. Few hazardous materials have reliable warning properties, especially in the low concentrations found in most university environments. EH&S can help determine whether hazardous materials used in a particular area can be detected.

• A description of labeling requirements. Each hazardous material container in the workplace must be labeled to identify the substance it contains and any hazard warnings. Labels must not be removed, defaced or illegible. Contact EH&S if you need guidance on how to comply with this requirement.

• Methods that minimize harmful effects of hazardous materials in the workplace, including good hygienic practices, protective equipment, maintenance of equipment in good working order, and emergency procedures.

• Notification to employees that they or their personal physician or collective bargaining agent may receive information contained in SDSs, and that no discriminatory action including dismissal or discharge may be taken against them if they exercise their legal rights under the California Hazardous Substances Information and Training Act and similar existing health and safety programs.

Requesting Safety Data Sheets

• Orders for hazardous materials. SDSs should be requested from the manufacturer or vendor when ordering hazardous materials.

• A stamp with a statement requesting SDSs for use on purchase orders is available from the Storehouse. If an order is placed by phone, be sure to request an SDS. If the phone order is followed up with a written purchase order, repeat the request for an SDS.

• SDSs are available electronically on the web site of the manufacturer or distributor. The EH&S website also has links to electronic SDS resources [3].

Receipt and Display of Safety Data Sheets

• When a shipment is received, check the packing materials carefully for SDSs. Some vendors prefer to provide SDS information electronically at no charge in lieu of shipping a paper copy with each order. In this case, a library of downloaded SDSs is suggested. SDSs on file must be accessible to employees at any time and must be from the specific vendor supplying the materials.

• Keep the SDSs in a prominently labeled binder or in a convenient location accessible to all
employees on all shifts. A copy of this SafetyNet and other information about the Hazardous Substances Information and Training Program should be kept in the same location.

- Inform all employees in writing of the location of SDSs. The poster Safety Data Sheets and Chemical Emergencies may be used to notify employees. The poster should be displayed in all locations where chemical substances are used or stored. Indicate the departmental location of the SDSs in the appropriate blank.

- SDSs may be kept electronically providing employees have guaranteed access during all hours of work. It is still good practice to keep paper copies of SDSs on the most hazardous and most common chemicals to ensure speedy access.

Documentation

Any safety training program is only as good as its documentation. Safety training documentation should include the name of the person(s) conducting training, the signature(s) of the person(s) receiving training, the date of the training and a brief description of the subjects covered (see attached documentation sheet). Documentation should be kept with other departmental personnel records or in the training sections of the IIPP or Chemical Hygiene Plan and cross-referenced to other documented programs as needed.

Contact

Health and Safety
healthandsafety@ucdavis.edu 530-752-1493
FAX: 530-752-4527

More information

Related content

1. Glossary of SDS Terms
2. Safety Data Sheets

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